

Furthermore, the international community has historically looked to the United States as the guiding light for peace in the Middle East. Precedent shows that when a U.S. administration is actively and publicly engaged in the region, peace agreements between Israel and her neighbors occur. Unfortunately, in the weeks preceding Secretary Powell's trip to the Middle East, the Administration—at the highest of levels—appeared to remain largely dormant.

Now, don't get me wrong, Mr. Speaker. I remain as ardent of a supporter of Israel, her right to exist as a Jewish state, and her right to protect herself, as I did the day I was first elected to Congress. At the same time, the idea of a Palestinian state is one that has already been accepted in Israel, the United States, and every country in the world. Nevertheless, achieving a Palestinian state cannot and will not be done by means of terrorist attacks on Israel. Palestinian radicals expressing their desire for an independent Palestinian state by blowing themselves up in a Jerusalem cafe is counter productive to the Palestinian nationalism they are fighting for. Rightfully so, Yasser Arafat must be held accountable for the agreements that he has already made. If he cannot deliver, then we must find someone who can.

Mr. Speaker, while some have turned pessimistic that a peaceful solution is possible, I remain hopeful that with direct presidential involvement in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, a peaceful solution is indeed plausible. Like so many of my colleagues, I remember vividly the handshake on the White House south lawn between the late Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin and PA Chairman Yasser Arafat. Prime Minister Rabin and Chairman Arafat showed us then that peace was possible. Today, it is time for all of us to show Israel and the Palestinians that peace remains the only real solution.

I urge the House to move swiftly and pass this needed resolution.

#### TAIWAN RELATIONS ACT

**HON. JOHN B. LARSON**

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, April 10, 2002*

Mr. LARSON of Connecticut. Mr. Speaker, I rise today on the twenty-third anniversary of the Taiwan Relations Act (P.L. 96–8) to reaffirm our commitment to the security of Taiwan.

First, I believe it is important to remember that this law was enacted “to preserve and promote extensive, close, and friendly commercial, cultural, and other relations between the people of the United States and the people on Taiwan, . . . to declare that peace and stability in the area are in the political, security, and economic interests of the United States, and are matters of international concern; . . . to make clear that the United States decision to establish diplomatic relations with the People's Republic of China rests upon the expectation that the future of Taiwan will be determined by peaceful means; . . . to provide Taiwan with arms of a defensive character, . . . and to maintain the capacity of the United States to resist any resort to force or other forms of coercion that would jeopardize the security, or the social or economic system, of the people of Taiwan.”

Even though we do not have official diplomatic relations with Taiwan, we have many “unofficial” contacts. Taiwan and the United States share common interests in many areas, such as trade and investment, science and technology, education, culture and security. The recent legislative elections in Taiwan shows that it shares our commitment to true democratic values and serve as a model for other nations in the region. We also share a respect for the freedom of the press, which I hope continues.

On the twenty-third anniversary of the enactment of the Taiwan Relations Act, I hope we will continue our cooperation with the democratically elected government of Taiwan by taking a number of steps; such as allowing Taiwan officials and our officials to meet freely in Washington and Taipei, improving Taiwan's access to our government agencies, and helping Taiwan become a member of appropriate international organizations such as the World Health Organization. The officials of Taiwan were chosen by the twenty-two million people of Taiwan to represent them and we should respect their choice. Taiwan is our seventh largest trading partner, and there are many critical economic, trade, health, security, and other issues which its officials need to discuss with our government officials as well as officials of international organizations.

Mr. Speaker, I believe that the recent formation of the Congressional Taiwan Caucus shows our support for the Taiwan Relations Act and our commitment to maintaining the military balance across the Taiwan Strait to counter the buildup on the Mainland. Therefore, I rise today to commemorate the twenty-third anniversary of the Act, to restate our commitment to the security of Taiwan, and to show our support for cooperation between Taiwan and the United States. Thank you.

#### QUALITY CHILD CARE ACT OF 2002

**HON. HEATHER WILSON**

OF NEW MEXICO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, April 10, 2002*

Mrs. WILSON of New Mexico. Mr. Speaker, today I am introducing a bill to help New Mexican children and their parents access quality, affordable child care. My bill would provide federal funds to help day care centers cover the costs of getting accredited. For many children, child care centers are an introduction to the world of learning. It's critical to start a child off on the right foot. That's why I am focusing on federal child care programs for low-income families and people working their way off welfare. We need to make sure that all children in child care have access to high quality, affordable programs.

This bill will make a real difference for childcare centers that rely, at least in part, on federal block grant funds. It will help day care centers provide the quality of care that children need. In New Mexico we have more than 22,000 children in federally subsidized child care programs.

The Quality Child Care Act of 2002, will increase funding to help child care centers pay for the cost of accreditation. Currently, federal law requires that 4% of Child Care and Development Block Grant funding is used for child care quality programs. The bill will increase

the current 4% funding requirement to 8% and would require that 4% be set-aside to help child development centers and homes pay for the costs associated with accreditation.

CCDBG is a federal program administered by the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) that provides grants to states to subsidize the child care expenses of low-income families with children under age 13, as well as for activities intended to improve the overall quality and supply of child care for families in general.

Education is my personal passion. In the coming weeks I intend to introduce two more bills focused on early childhood education.

#### IN SUPPORT OF THE NATIONAL DAY OF SILENCE

**HON. ELIOT L. ENGEL**

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, April 10, 2002*

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commend the efforts of thousands of students across the United States today. These students are participating in the National Day of Silence that calls attention to the treatment that lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender students encounter each and every day. In my home state of New York there are 167 schools participating.

Since 1999, the Gay, Lesbian Straight Education Network has conducted surveys to document the experiences of LGBT students in high schools across our nation. In the 2001 survey, over 900 LGBT students were surveyed in 48 states and the District of Columbia. What they found should send a shiver up the spine of every member of the House of Representatives. The sad fact is that LGBT students face taunting, harassment, and physical violence. 85% of these students reported hearing homophobic remarks, such as “fag-got” or “dyke.” 24% reported hearing such remarks from faculty or school staff, 65% reported being sexually harassed. And most disheartening, 42% were physically harassed because of their sexual orientation.

Our children go to school for one reason! To learn! As a former educator, I can guarantee you that if a student is worried about being harassed or beaten up, he or she is not paying attention in class—he or she is not learning. We have an obligation to make sure that our schools are safe. Anything else is a failure on our part as a Congress and as a society.

The students participating in today's National Day of Silence deserve our strong support. They are taking a stand for themselves, their families, and their friends. Schools, such as the Horace Mann School and Yonkers Middle High School, are leading the way in teaching our children to respect each other, to appreciate differences, and to ensure that all our children have the opportunity for a safe and fruitful education.

National Day of Silence is sponsored by the Gay, Lesbian, Straight Education Network and the United States Student Association. I want to congratulate these organizations and the hundreds of schools and thousands of students for a job well done.